

International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers

Testimony to the Labor and Public Employees Committee

In Opposition to SB 990 An Act Concerning the Prevailing Rate of Wages

March 10th, 2011

Senator Prague, Representative Zalaski, and members of the Labor and Public Employees Committee, my name is Bruce Silva and I am here today to speak on behalf of the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers in opposition to Senate Bill 990, An Act Concerning the Prevailing Rate of Wages.

The IBEW represents over 2,000 licensed electrical journeymen and apprentices who benefit every year from Connecticut's prevailing wage law. CT has maintained its current prevailing wage thresholds since 1991, and the IBEW applauds the CT legislature for maintaining sound and effective public policy for so many years. Many studies have shown time and again that prevailing wage laws are beneficial to a state's economy and its residents and workers. Prevailing wage laws throughout the country:

- Help to create jobs by offering decent wages to attract skilled workers and support local apprenticeship programs
- Provide economic benefit because workers paid attractive and competitive wages will put the money they make back into the state by purchasing homes and making use of local businesses and services. Each dollar paid in prevailing wages produces \$1.50 in economic activity.
- Help to control construction costs because workers on projects that pay the prevailing rate produce 13-15% more value-added per worker than non prevailing rate projects.

In addition to the numerous benefits of prevailing wage laws, only a few of which are mentioned above, I would like to point out that of the 32 states in the country that have prevailing wage laws, CT's threshold is second only to Maryland with the highest threshold already. More importantly, of the surrounding states, Massachusetts and New York have no threshold at all, and Rhode Island, New Jersey, Vermont, and Maine all have thresholds much lower than Connecticut. It would seem then that of all the surrounding states, Connecticut already has the competitive edge.

Therefore, the IBEW respectfully requests that the legislature reject bill 990 and realize that increasing the prevailing wage threshold in CT is not necessary and would not provide an economical benefit.

Thank you for your time and consideration to this matter.

Bruce Silva

IBEW Local 35

*Sources: www.smartcitiesprevail.com
CT General Assembly OLR report 2010-R-0526